



Ministry of
Environment



Introducing BC's New *Water Sustainability Act*

PNWER Summit
July 23, 2014

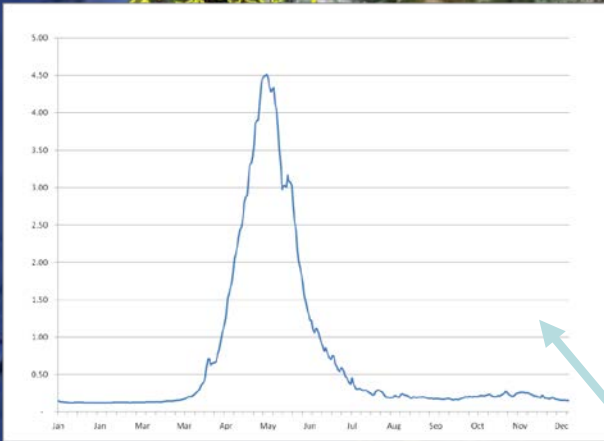
Lynn Kriwoken, Executive Director
Water Protection and Sustainability
BC Ministry of Environment



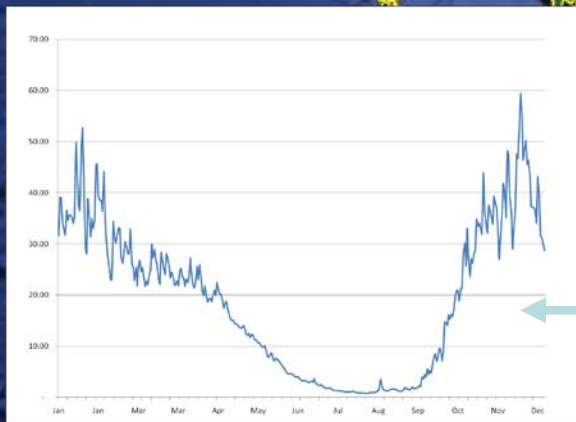
Overview

- BC context
- Engagement
- The new Act
- Lessons learned
- PNWER shared policy interests

British Columbia



British Columbia



Vancouver Island
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

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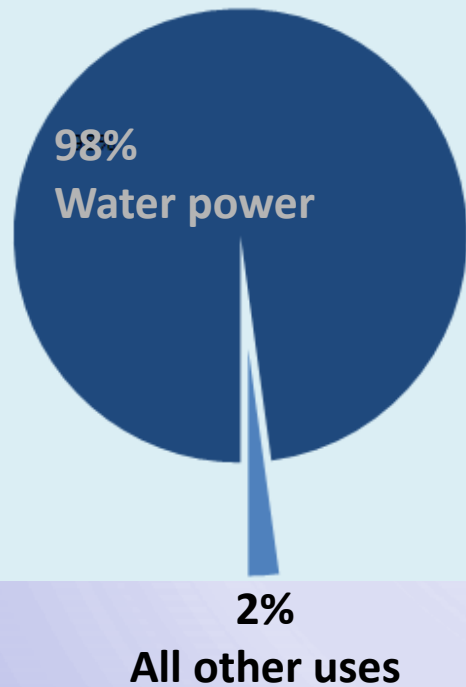
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Streaming 100%

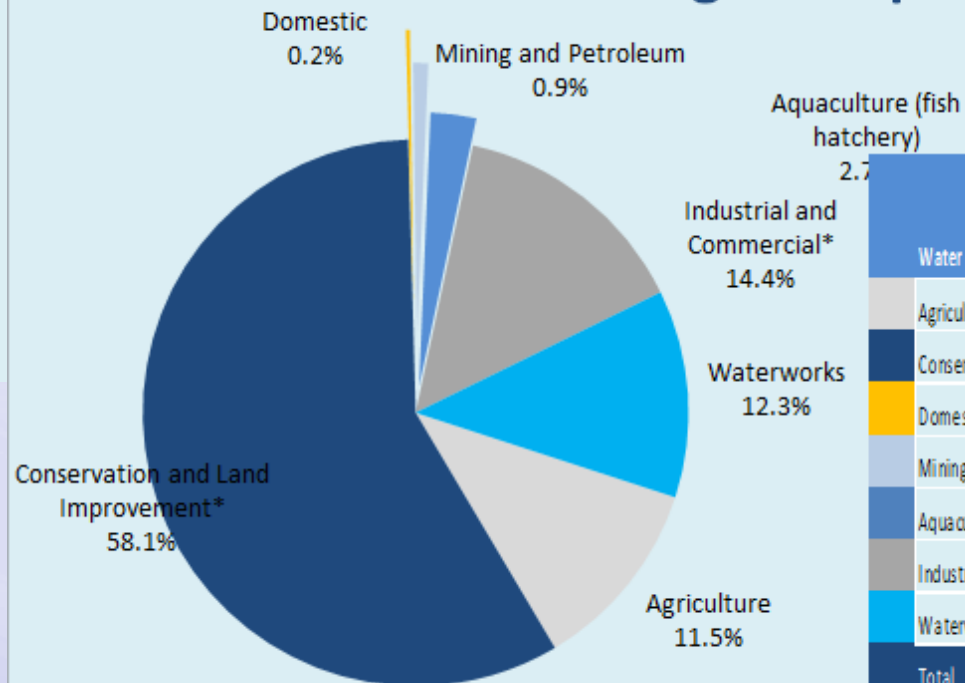
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Surface Water Allocation by Volume in British Columbia – All Users



Surface Water Allocation by Volume - excluding waterpower



Water Use	Annual Allocated Volume (1,000 m ³)
Agriculture	1,570,042
Conservation and Land Improvement*	7,945,290
Domestic	31,720
Mining and Petroleum	119,933
Aquaculture (fish hatchery)	369,467
Industrial and Commercial*	1,965,075
Waterworks	1,678,646
Total	13,681,173



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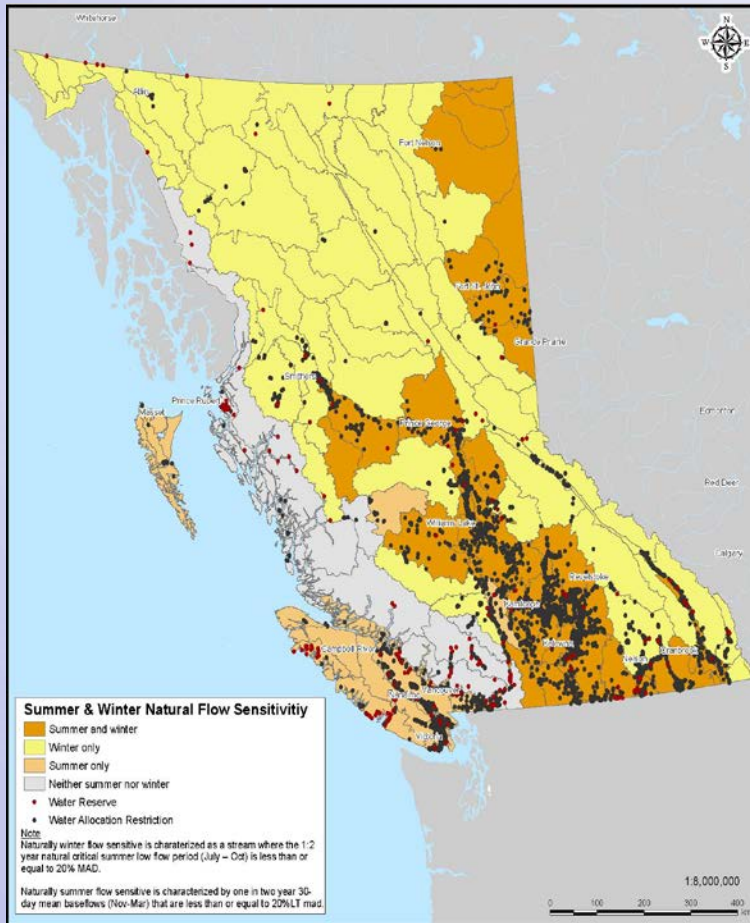
Clean and Abundant Water is Essential

- Public health and well-being
- Thriving communities, a growing population
- Healthy ecosystems and fish populations
- Food production and nutrition
- Strong diverse economy





Our Water is Under Pressure



- Naturally flow sensitive areas
- Population growth and urbanization
- Resource development
- Climate change
- Water allocation restrictions
- Competing demands

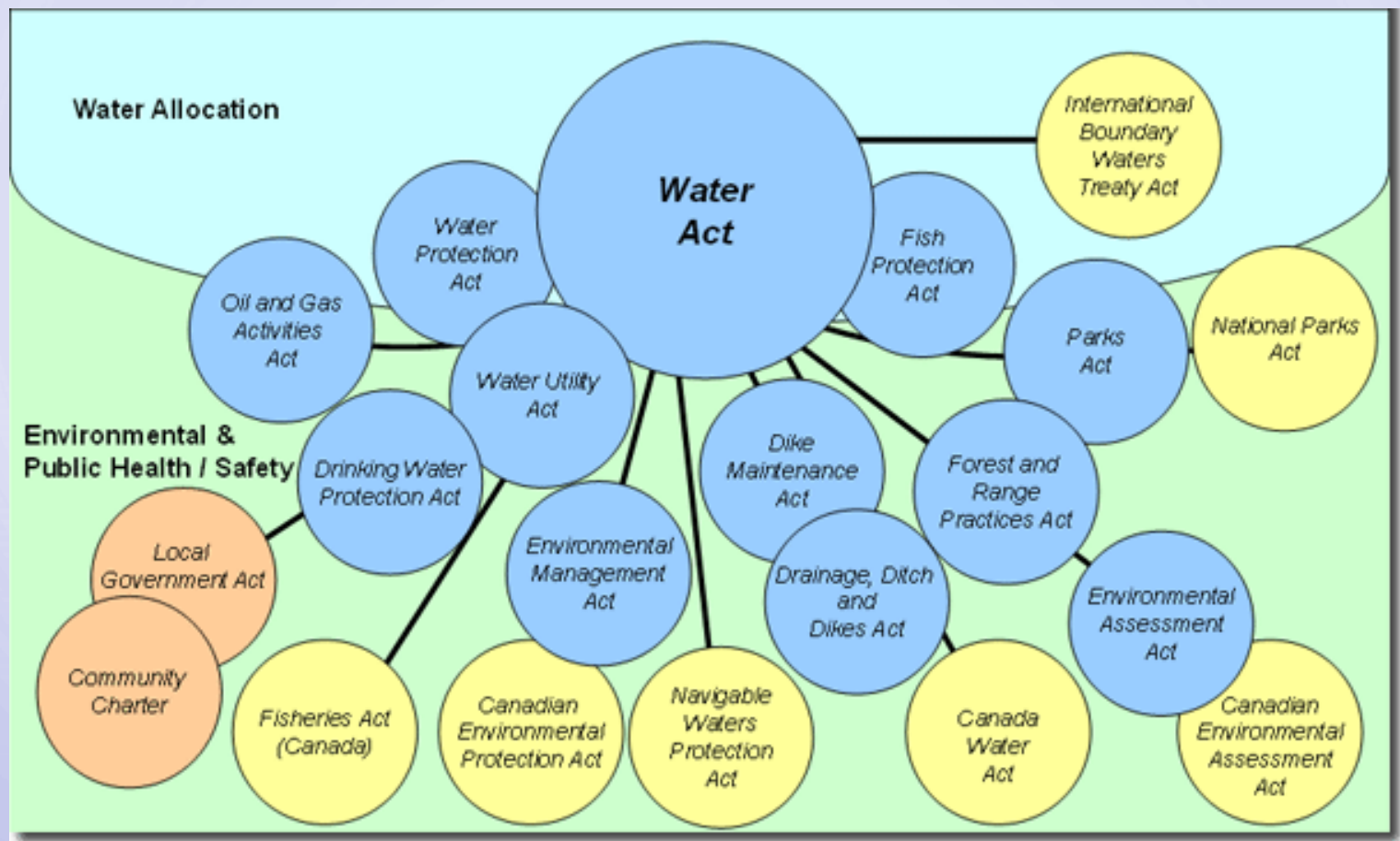


Legislative Framework

- Federal system – constitution outlines federal and provincial responsibilities
- Natural resource management, including water, is provincial jurisdiction
- Provinces work together on water issues both bi- and multi-laterally
- International boundary waters

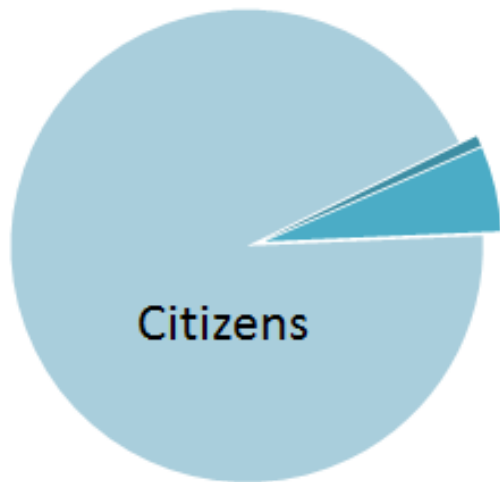


Legislative Framework for Water in BC



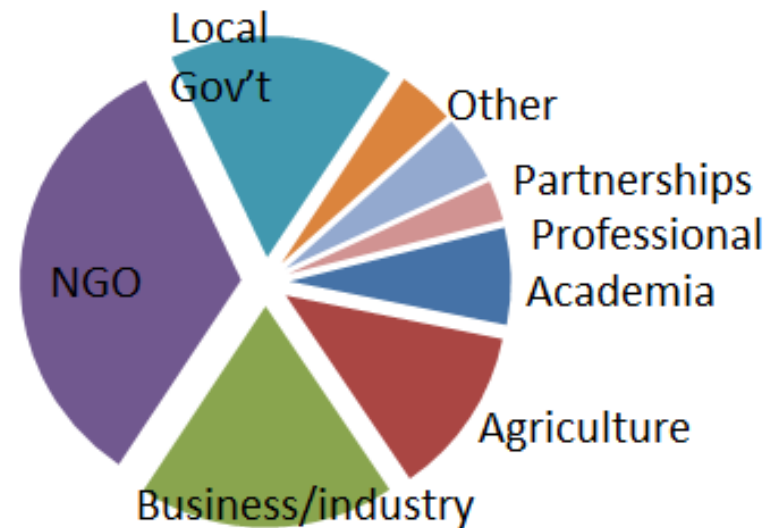


Engaging British Columbians



First Nations

Stakeholder
groups



- 3 phases, Dec 2009 – May 2014
- Traditional methods + social media
- 5,000+ written submissions
- 50,000+ visits to blog/website



Water Act → *Water Sustainability Act*

- Allocation and management of surface water
- Limited tools to regulate access to or withdrawal of groundwater
- Consideration of environmental flow needs in policy only
- Allocation and management of surface and ground water
- Environmental flows requirements
- More flexibility regulating during scarcity
- New governance arrangements and planning tools
- Area-based regulations



1. Protect Stream Health and Aquatic Environments

- Consider environmental flow needs in new water allocation decisions
- For existing licences, temporary restrictions to protect critical environmental flow needs
- Expand prohibitions on dumping debris into streams and aquifers





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2. Consider Water in Land Use Decisions

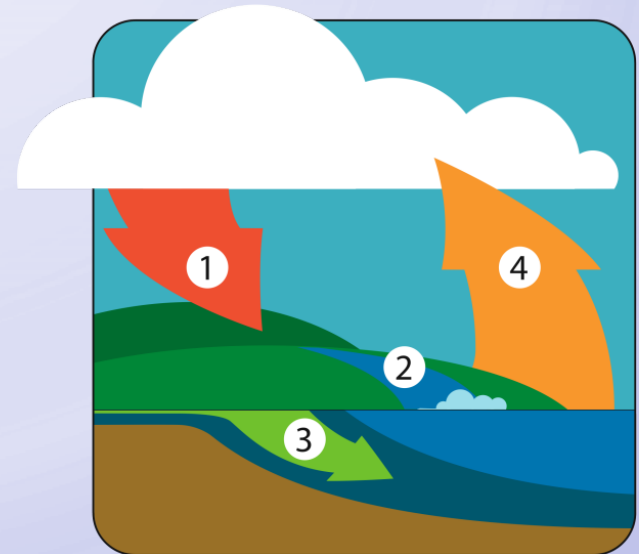
- Consider water objectives in resource and land use decisions
 - crown or private land
 - streams, aquifers, areas
- Develop water sustainability plans
 - Ministerial Order, public process
 - restrictions on land/resource use
 - reductions or changes to water rights





3. Regulate and Protect Groundwater Use

- Manage surface and groundwater as single resource
- Most uses will be licensed; fees and annual rentals
- Domestic users excluded
- Date of first use will guide priority date
- Improve understanding of aquifers





4. Regulate Water Use During Scarcity

- All users could be regulated during scarcity – including groundwater users, short term approval holders, users of unrecorded water
- Retain FITFIR with exceptions
- Ensure water supply for essential human and livestock needs
- Allow temporary restrictions to protect critical environmental flows



5. Improving Security, Water Use Efficiency and Conservation

- Expand beneficial use requirement (conservation)
- Set water conservation targets and carry out audits
- Make water licences reviewable
- Allow area-based regulation for specific regions (e.g. license small ground water users, measure and report, close a basin, restrict well drilling)
- Enable creation of agricultural water reserves



6. Measuring and Reporting Water Use

- Require large volume users to measure, record and report water use
- Smaller volume users to measure in specific circumstances under “area-based” regulations



7. Enable a Range of Governance Approaches

- Increase flexibility in governance arrangements to better suit local needs
- Allow for delegation of some activities or decisions to agencies outside of government
- Support the creation of advisory groups
- Clear and consistent provincial framework



First Nations

- 203 First Nations and 30 language tribal groupings
- Constitutionally protected aboriginal rights
- 61 First Nations participating in Treaty process; 5 modern treaties to date
- Unique cultural, spiritual and economic interests in water
- Desire to manage water resources, including planning and decision making



Water Fees and Rentals

- Simplicity
- Fairness and equity
- Implications for water users
- Impact on water resource
- Cost recovery
- Efficiency
- Food security and public health





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Lessons Learned

- Engage early and often
- Listen to understand
- Build trust, one conversation at a time
- Believe that policy will be stronger as a result
- Take time to get it right, not just done
- Manage expectations
- Keep eye on the prize



PNWER Shared Policy Interests

- Value of water to economy
- Allocation & regulation
- Groundwater
- Water Pricing
- Transboundary
- Engagement
- Education & outreach





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Thank you!

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